

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 25, 2020

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
311 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mark Takano  
Chairman  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
B234 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Phil Roe  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
102 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Moran and Takano and Ranking Members Tester and Roe:

We are writing to express our support for renaming the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) clinic in Bend, Oregon, after Robert Maxwell, a World War II veteran and Medal of Honor recipient. At the time of his passing, he was the oldest Medal of Honor recipient in the nation and one of four remaining veterans from World War II to be awarded the Medal of Honor.

Mr. Maxwell served in the 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division in World War II. During his time with the unit he participated in campaigns in North Africa, Sicily, mainland Italy, and southern France. During his service he reached the rank of Technician Fifth Grade and was awarded a Medal of Honor, Silver Star, Silver Star Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star, and two Purple Hearts.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on September 7, 1944, near Besancon, France, when his observation post was attacked by enemy forces. Against heavy fire he led several soldiers, armed with only .45 caliber handguns, and fought against numerically superior enemy forces. Mr. Maxwell jumped on an enemy grenade to save the lives of his fellow soldiers. He was severely maimed by the blast, but recovered and went on to lead a full life.

After the war, Mr. Maxwell returned to civilian life and continued to serve the communities he called home through teaching. He was an auto mechanic teacher at Bend High School and at Lane Community College. He also helped create an auto mechanic program at Central Oregon Community College.

Renaming the VA facility in Bend after Mr. Maxwell would be a fitting tribute to an American hero who meets all the criteria for such an honor. For your consideration, we have enclosed letters of support from the Bend City Council as well as the Oregon state commanders for the

American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled American Veterans. Thank you for your consideration of this request and any related legislation.

Sincerely,

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Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator

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Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

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Greg Walden  
Member of Congress

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Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

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Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress

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Kurt Schrader  
Member of Congress

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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress